



COMMUNITY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

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Community Service Newsletter is published four times a year by Community Service, Inc. Our purpose is to promote the small community as a basic social institution involving organic units of economic, social and spiritual development

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Editor's Note

We want to involve members in our planning process at Community Service over the next two years. Community Service has always been based on the needs and interests of our members. In building on that tradition, we are starting a new section of the newsletter *By and About our Members*. We encourage you to write to us about your projects, ideas, books you are reading and so on. If you would like to network with other members about particular topics, let us know. Perhaps you know of an upcoming event in which others would be interested. This newsletter is for you and we want to make it as easy as possible for you to get assistance and contribute your ideas.

Since part of planning is assessing the past, we will also include something from the past in each issue. We hope that you enjoy the developments as they occur and encourage your participation.

- Marianne MacQueen



DEDICATION: Paul Smoker 1938 - 1998

This issue of Community Service News is dedicated to Paul Smoker who was the Lloyd Professor of Peace Studies and World Law at Antioch College for the past seven years. Smoker died on January 7th of complications following a heart attack. Paul was one of those rare people who are able to make community wherever they find themselves. He was truly a world citizen. A peace activist and researcher he was one of the founders of global peace studies. He taught in colleges and universities all over the world and was a colleague and friend to many. Paul's work lives on through his writings, organizations in which he was involved and the many people whose lives he touched.

Sunflowers, Critical Mass and Sustainability

Notes on the October 1997 Community Service Conference

BY BILL FELKER

One of the small-group sessions at the past fall's Community Service Conference opened with a poem, "The Sunflowers," by Mary Oliver.

*Come with me
to visit the sunflowers,
read one of the participants,
they are shy

but want to be friends;
they have wonderful stories*

The person reading handed the poem to the woman beside him:

*each of them, though it stands
in a crowd of many,
like a separate universe,

is lonely, the long work
of turning their lives
into a celebration
is not easy. Come

and let us talk with those modest faces,
the simple garments of leaves,
the coarse roots in the earth
so uprightly burning.*

The group reading of "The Sunflowers" and the meditation that followed captured well the spirit of the conference, *Committed Living for Sustainable Community*. People came to tell and listen to stories. The process of making ethical lives, they said, was not easy. They needed each

other, and they wanted to share their needs and ideas.

The search for support was the entryway to an exploration of sustainability, from the opening address throughout the two-day conference. Keynote speaker Joe Jenkins, a long-time western Pennsylvania homesteader, sketched the core of his new book-in-progress, *Birth to Death: A Practical Guide to Simple Alternatives*, fleshing out his philosophy of living with earthy and often poignant anecdotes from his own experience.

Jenkins' humor had enlivened last year's conference, and he introduced himself this time as the "shit and shingle guy" (a reference to his books: *The Humanure Handbook* and *The Slate Roof Bible*). But he quickly left jokes behind as he discussed two reasons why he thought the human race might be destroying the planet.

One of his hypotheses was the "robbing frenzy theory." As a beekeeper, Jenkins had observed the "robbing frenzy" in which bees become obsessed with stealing all the honey from a break that appears in a neighboring hive. "A hive is a sustainable system unless a robbing frenzy occurs. Maybe human beings are driven to rob the earth of its resources the way one hive depletes another. Among bees, the frenzy lasts until the honey is all gone. With humans, maybe it will last a few hundred years."

A second possibility, suggested Jenkins, is that "maybe humans are like a disease organism on the planet. Maybe our purpose is to undermine the health of the earth, to kill our host, like a cancer."

Admitting that we could choose to counteract these tendencies, Jenkins focused the rest of his talk on alternatives. He examined at length: home birthing, breastfeeding, raising our own food, making clothes, avoiding "a life of wage slavery" to a mortgage, using local and recycled materials, sending children to alternative schools ("what they learn at public institutions," he said, "is obedience and conformity"), and avoiding the consumer side of marriage, ("Do your own ceremony, write your own license," he urged).

He also suggested to the audience that they avoid the consumerism of death. Then he related the experience of what he did when two of his children died at home. Until he began the stories of those tragedies, Jenkins' speech had touched upon relatively familiar ground for most of us in attendance. However, when he talked about his newborn child dying several days after birth, and about the cremation on the homestead in the middle of the winter -- the ground frozen too hard for burial -- he entered one of the most taboo areas of American life and mores.

Jenkins and his wife had handled the death alone on the farm, ignoring many of society's conventions. They were subsequently investigated thoroughly by the police and had to undergo painful questioning and harassment because of their actions. When a second child was killed in an accident several years later, Jenkins was able to find support in the authorities as well as in the community for home burial. The second story contrasted sharply with the first, a story of interdependence instead of independence.

While the telling of these incidents came at the end of the talk, they were the centerpiece of Jenkins' presentation, and they brought into high

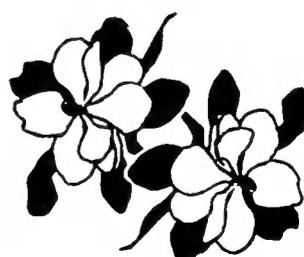
relief the seriousness of the issues he was presenting. Both the lonely winter burials and the burial in the community stood in clear opposition to the typical American way of death. The example of Jenkins and his wife set a standard for committed living around which the rest of the conference inevitably turned.

Saturday morning's workshops followed the confessional model of Jenkins' speech as people met in small groups and attended workshops to discuss why they had come to the conference and what they hoped to bring home from it. One person talked about his trek back from depression and how service to others in community had helped him.

A single mother spoke about her worries and her frustration at trying to make a living and raise her son: "He will probably imitate what I do with my life rather than what I tell him to do; I want to act the right way, do the right things. How can I find support?"

A woman who ran a small mail-order service, books about how to live simply and honorably, was looking for fellowship.

An organic farmer from northern Ohio told his story: "People where I'm from talk more about me than about anybody else; but when I see them, they don't have anything to say to me." Shunned because he farms organically, he came to the conference "to see if there is something I could learn to do about that."



In the workshop "Community Building through Support Groups and Clearness Meetings," conducted by Tova Green, president of the Board of the Buddhist Peace Fellowship, the farmer and others were shown how they might achieve their life objectives.

"We feel we have to face problems alone," Green said. "But that's not true. We can call on friends and other people we know." She talked about how clearness sessions could be a way of gathering support from friends and colleagues.

"Matters that we often consider personal and private can be illuminated by the careful listening and reflection of a group of people we trust," she said. "Valuable as our *inner teacher* may be, it is sometimes possible to hear that inner voice more clearly in a circle of support. We have to practice asking, practice learning to be specific, practice forming questions for clearness.

In another workshop, Greg Coleridge, Director of the Economic Justice and Empowerment Program for the Northeast Ohio American Friends Service Committee of Akron, spoke about how the development of local currency can be a way of bringing people together as well as counteracting some of the personality and materialism of modern life.

Admitting that local currencies face an uphill struggle, Coleridge gave the example of how, in the 1980's, people worked to stop the nuclear arms race. "They saw that government wasn't going to act responsibly," he said, so they created the movement to reverse the danger. These people achieved an incredible amount of nuclear literacy in a short period of time. We have to do the same with economics."

Coleridge described the local currency programs currently operating in Ithaca, New York, and Akron, Ohio. Participants like Ernest Morgan, son of Arthur Morgan, founder of Community Service, shared their experiences with local currencies, and told how it did indeed bring people together. During the panel discussion in the evening, Coleridge encouraged the group to continue to share experiences with local financial cooperation. "The economy is not too complicated to understand," he stated. "We just need to educate ourselves so we can put our financial house in order."

Throughout that evening discussion, people continued to give and take concerns about the future. Gathered together around the workshop leaders, men and women expressed their different hopes and fears.

Someone foresaw doom: "We are on the brink of an economic collapse," he warned. "It could be like what happened in 1929 - only worse: millions more people out of work, hundreds of companies going bankrupt. I foresee a lot of suffering if we don't get ready."

"The system is based on greed," someone else said. "We have to face reality, work with things the way they are."

"People are the greatest resources," a man stated, "more important than the forest or the water. But we don't look to them -- we discard people as readily as we discard the other natural resources."

"Caring and sharing: that is what is needed," stated another.

"I'm a city person, and I see the deep hunger people have for contact with one another," said a woman from California. "Even a lot of my

own friends don't know each other. I am impressed with Yellow Springs -- so many people have stayed here and raised their children here.

When one participant in the audience reacted negatively to a statement by another, the issue was resolved amicably, and the friendly resolution was seen as a hopeful sign. "We need to have this kind of honesty in order to get along. It's really our relationships that are the key to a sustainable community. Support is essential for sustainability."

"And how do we live with one another when we are different?" someone asked. "That's what we should be all about."

"I'm optimistic," a man said. "There is so much visioning going on all over the world, a lot of lessons being learned by and from people who are doing what needs to be done."

"When we're around like-minded people we don't feel so much alone, responded someone else. "I feel more at home here than when I go back home!"

Another voice: "Here, I feel I'm at least on the right track, I'm not losing my mind."

And Ernest Morgan reminded everybody about what Arthur Morgan had said about "critical mass" -- a concept taken from physics and applied to human energy -- that when people are separated and scattered they have little power;

but when they unite, they are able to do whatever they need to do. Ernest summed up the conference by stating: "We're coming together and creating critical mass. That's what's happening here."

During the last session on Sunday morning, everyone reflected on the successes and failures of the weekend; then, led by Tova Green they held hands and sang a song written by Libby Roderick:

*How could anyone ever tell you
You are anything less than beautiful?
How could anyone ever tell you
You are anything less than whole?
How could anyone fail to notice
that your loving is a miracle,
How deeply you're connected
to my soul.*

The music brought individuals together in one last way, and there were tears and hugs and exchanges of addresses before the simple luncheon in honor of Jane Morgan, who had submitted her resignation as director of Community Service, effective January 1, 1998. During the testimonials, Ernest Morgan called her the "guiding spirit" of the organization ever since the death of Arthur Morgan. Board president Denise Runyon spoke about Jane's skillfulness as an editor and conference maker. "Congratulations," she said, "for birthing a self-reliant Community Service."



Community Service: Honoring our Past/Creating our Future

BY MARIANNE MACQUEEN

The term "reinventing" as in an organization reinventing itself, has become popular recently. I had rather liked that phrase and thought: perhaps that is what we are doing at Community Service. Then our office received a survey which asked that very question. Just as I was ready to respond in the affirmative I read the second question. It asked if our organization was "downsizing" as part of this process. Regardless of the original meaning of "to reinvent" I realized that it has been co-opted by those whose primary concern is the bottom line. So I will not use that term to describe what we are doing at Community Service. We do, however, want our members and readers to know that these next two years will be a time of evaluating our past, assessing present needs and opportunities and envisioning our future.

It never occurred to me when my former husband began his graduate work on Arthur Morgan in the late 60's that thirty years later I would become director of the organization Morgan founded. Twenty-six years ago I moved into a rambling old house across the street from Community Service, Inc. Along with Don Hollister and Faith Morgan (Morgan's granddaughter), I worked at Community Service for a couple years in the early 70's. My career between then and now has been eclectic. Today, Faith, Don and I are once again at Community Service. This time Don is president of the Board and Faith is a Board member.

It is both exciting and daunting to take over the directorship of this organization which has such a long and rich history. The purpose for which Community Service was founded is of increasing importance. The writings of Arthur, Ernest and Griscom Morgan are as timely today as they were when they were written. It is for this reason that I will be researching past files, interviewing older members and associates of the Morgans, reading past newsletters and so on to lay a solid basis for future plans. In order to better assess conditions, trends and opportunities facing communities today we will also be reaching out to groups, organizations and individuals with similar concerns. We want to share this process with our members, get your reactions to our findings and ideas, find out what is important to you, how we can assist you and how you would like to contribute to this effort.

Since 1940 when Community Service was founded, the fabric of community has become increasingly stressed and people's longing for it has heightened. The word "community" has come to take on many meanings. We have "communities" of various professional groupings, Internet "communities" and "communities" which last only as long as a weekend workshop. The result is that the term has lost much of its meaning. One of the tasks for me has been to clarify the the definition of community which is the focus of this organization. Our letterhead states that we are:

concerned with the small community as a basic social institution, involving organic units of economic, educational, cultural and spiritual development.

I recently read a definition of community in a book about the Amish which fits, I think, with



the meaning Community Service has traditionally used:

Communities are more than physical places. They are locations where people live, work, raise their children and go to church. They are places where both the good things and the bad things of life can happen.

I have underlined the last sentence because it points to the fact that community is more than something warm and fuzzy. When I begin to question the "sense of community" in my village and wonder if I really want to live here this definition reminds me that community, like marriage, is based on commitment, my own commitment to take the bad with the good.

I accepted the position as Director of Community Service because of my commitment to community. Most recently I served as coordinator of our community mediation program. In that capacity I intervened in a variety of community conflicts. In the course of my time with the mediation program I began to believe that many conflicts could have been better handled if there had been more effective community practices, processes and structures. For example, it was discouraging to see adults afraid of interacting with youth who hung out downtown. As a mediator I could encourage more communication and interaction, but I was not in a position to set up ongoing mechanisms for that to happen. At the same time I was limited by my role; I could not serve as an advocate. There were times when it seemed that an effective advocate was needed in a particular situation. For example, I believe that an advocate for youth is, in fact, an advocate for the community. I very much value the practice and theory being developed in the fields of conflict resolution and peace and justice. At the same time I have be-

come frustrated with the limitations of serving as a neutral.

As director of Community Service I can use my conflict resolution background and be an advocate for communities. One way I will be doing that is through a focus on community decision making and problem solving. Donald Kemmis, whose book is reviewed later in this issue, speaks of the need for communities to develop practices which help people focus on the common good. Chris Carlson, a former Yellow Springs resident, made a similar observation in a recent interview with the Yellow Springs News. She noted that the social fabric of communities has been strained by the mobility and diversity of today's society. The mediating influences such as church, family and accepted mores have been weakened. Carlson notes that "social capital" is "the glue, the common purpose that holds communities together." She said that conflicts which occur in a community can deplete the social capital while:

Civic organizations and associations on the other hand build social capital. They offer common ground for people who meet. These links, those common bonds, bring people back together again after major disagreements and give a community ways to deal with differences and continue to live together.

It is possible for communities to deal with conflicts in such a way as to build "social capital." We experienced this process a few years ago in Yellow Springs after an incident involving a police officer. The community had become polarized and the mediation program was called in to help. We worked with the police to set up a series of community forums about community-police relationship. A consensus developed out of the small and large

group sessions that the village **did** value the police and suggestions were made for improving the relationship.

Another direction in which I believe it is important for Community Service to move is in the work of undoing racism. Every community in this country has been affected by racism. It has been my experience that most social and civic organizations in small communities are essentially segregated. The best that generally happens in "community" organizations is token inclusion of people of color. Community Service, unfortunately, is no different. While it does have a history of working on some issues for and with people of color, it remains primarily a white organization.

The struggle to develop into an inclusive organization is one we cannot neglect. It is one for the long haul. A direction we are taking is to find ways to partner and support groups working on issues of racism. Another direction will be to collaborate with groups led by people of color. We are not alone in this struggle and we can learn from other organizations who have made the long term commitment to become inclusive.

One such group is the Mennonite Conciliation Service which is a program of the Mennonite Central Committee. "At MCC U.S. we have adopted an explicitly anti-racist agenda, which calls us to examine programs, policies, procedures and modes of operation for anything that is exclusive of people of color." Queries developed by MCS are helpful for any group working to become inclusive.² I share them because Community Service will be using them and they may help in discussions within your community or organization:

1. *The thing I find most exciting about my institution's approach*

- to racism is...*
2. *The thing that concerns me the most about my institution's approach to racism is...*
3. *I would define the present state of my institution in terms of institutionalized racism as...*
4. *The short- and long-term steps my institution can take to dismantle racism include...*

The last concern I would like to discuss involves that aspect of the simple life style which involves the balance of "doing" with "being." Qani Belul in his article in this issue notes that the simple life style is not really so simple. The ability to bring balance to one's life and work is an example of this. I was recently sorting through old files in the "vault-room" at Community Service when I noticed a short article by Arthur Morgan. I was struck by the title, *Community and Solitude*. Morgan was saying back in 1945 what more and more of us are finally recognizing today. He notes that:

Small community life of itself does not necessarily spell peace and poise. It may be cluttered and hurried unless poise and a sense of proportion are deliberately achieved. Most great intellectual and spiritual leaders spend much of their time in solitude. Leadership on a humbler plane has the same need. Hurried or crowded living seldom is deep living... The habit of many schools of crowding the day with social and athletic events, leaving no time for leisure and contemplation, is a sure way to mediocrity. The craving for quiet and solitude is killed.

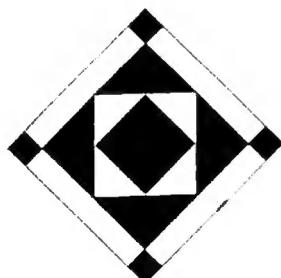
Community should provide a favorable environment for the optimum

development of the personality. It should not infringe on personality so as to thwart or distort its reasonable development. Persons who prefer to spend much time by themselves should not be considered antisocial. Spinoza in his attic made a greater contribution to life and to community than the busiest mayor in town.³

For me, the ability to achieve this balance requires faith. I need to trust that it is right to say "no" to some things, that it is important to sometimes start the day with a walk in the woods rather than rushing to work, and that the work will be done.

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Striving for Development in the "First World" (or trying to kick the plastic addiction)

BY QANI BELUL

One of the important lessons I learned while living in Mali, West Africa, is that there are countless ways to lead our lives, and newer, faster, more modern, and more high-tech do not necessarily mean a better quality of life. In fact, more often just the opposite holds true: The plain life means the good life.

Since we moved to Japan, though, that lesson has not always been easy to put into practice. Here, as in the U. S., "development" has become a kind of religion, and the god of technology is now firmly in place alongside the traditionally revered deities. The blessings are questionable: for every benefit come drawbacks, and environmental degradation is one of the worst outcomes of the industrialized world's high tech, convenience store lifestyle. In Japan many goods are single-, double-, or even triple-wrapped in plastic. Numerous products, from lighters to clothes to cars, have a short lifespan and are then discarded. Chemical waste and plastics go up in smoke daily.

Despite the difficult obstacles, my wife (also a former Mali Peace Corps volunteer) and I strive to live a "simple life." I put the phrase in quotation marks because it is a misnomer. As writer and plain-living advocate Wendell Berry said of the phrase, "I wouldn't use the word 'simple.' I think I'm living more complexly."

Recently the truth of this comment struck me when we decided we'd had enough of throwing away nonrecyclable plastic packaging every day and decided to give it up. (In Japan, much of this packaging is classified as "burnable" and

ends up at incineration plants, polluting the air with toxic chemicals such as dioxin). We soon realized, though, that practically everything we ate came packaged with some sort of plastic -- *ramen* in plastic bags, tofu in plastic containers, fruit in Saran wrap, mushrooms on styrofoam trays -- and foregoing all this involved major changes in our diet and a more complex way of life.

For example, tofu (a daily staple for us) and bread always come packaged in plastic at grocery stores so we now must also go to a tofu maker and bakery where we buy those foods without packaging. Since we don't use stores' free plastic bags we must always take our own bags and containers when we shop, and when we do buy foods wrapped in plastic we unwrap them at the store and leave the containers to be reused. This is a major change from when we first moved to Japan several years ago and were often embarrassed even to say, "no bags, please," since it's highly unusual to refuse them.

But the response to our disdain for burnable plastic has been good and this makes us bolder. Not long ago a clerk at the store I regularly frequent smiled and thanked me for leaving the packaging. Several weeks later another clerk at the same store came up to me while I was bagging my groceries and, while talking with me, unwrapped my purchases and set aside the containers to be reused. The other day at the farmers' market the salesclerk at the checkout table was both surprised and amused when we emptied all the produce we'd purchased into a cloth bag and gave her back the farmers' plastic bags.

Although life has become more complicated since we began trying to kick the plastic habit, it has also improved. I feel a lot better about shopping when I'm in line with a basket of nonwrapped foods or foods in recyclable

packaging, instead of a basket bulging with cellophane, styrofoam, and plastic containers destined for the local incinerator. And our diet hasn't suffered. We may have to give up some healthy foods we love, such as miso and seaweed (always packaged in plastic), but at the same time we're forced to give up junk foods like chips, pies, and candy and replace them with fruits and vegetables. Moreover, it is gratifying to bypass the sterile, impersonal supermarket several times a week and bike to a street-side or farmers' market instead to buy produce in bulk, or to Mr. Kosuzu's "tofu-farm" to talk a bit, pick up several blocks of just-made tofu, and have our bottle refilled with soy milk, straight from the bean teat and free of preservatives.

There are many things I really love about Japan but the "First World" throwaway mentality definitely isn't one of them. Consequently, I try to put some of the plain-living lessons that my experience in Mali taught me into practice here. For me, that's what international development is all about.

Here are some other "Third World" Earthfriendly actions we've been able to take here in Japan:

Buy used goods or salvage them from the trash

Never drive. Walk, bike, or use trains and buses.

Adopt a vegan diet

Forego air conditioning and fans

Compost "raw" garbage

Take advantage of the local recycling program.

Awareness Check

Reprinted with permission from the 1/15/98 issue of The Yellow Springs News, Yellow Springs, OH.

To the Editor:

If you have ever said, "I'm just one small person -- what can I do to save the environment?" let me tell you a story.

I was in the IGA today standing in line behind Richard Zopf, and we were talking as we were checking out. I noticed, but didn't think too much of it, that Richard had brought his own brown bag to put his groceries in; and when the clerk asked if he needed another, he said he'd make it all fit.

On the way out we were still talking, and he pushed open the right-hand door while I went through the left-handed, automatic door.

Richard got on his bike and rode away, holding his big bag of groceries in one hand and steering with the other.

As I put my new plastic bag of groceries in the car, it hit me! In a matter of minutes, Richard had just done three things to help the environment, while I had done nothing. He does it so often he doesn't even have to think about it any more, but many of us need to be more aware of our actions.

Thank you, Richard, for making me aware of mine.

-Donna Haller, Yellow Springs, OH

Richard Zopf is a member of the Community Service, Inc. Board of Trustees



Readers Write

About Land Trust

I want to acknowledge your letter regarding my request for help to conserve the fifteen acres of woods I inherited. You will be interested to know that the woods have been donated to the North Central Ohio Land Conservancy which has arranged a conservation easement with an organization called the Gorman Nature Center. This seems to be a good solution and I am satisfied. I would be pleased if you could convey this information to Al Denman also. My thanks to you both for your interest and concern.

Diane Dunlap, Caracas, Venezuela

About Community Service Newsletter

Congratulations on the Newsletter content which always seems to focus on the values that are important if we are to evolve towards a more humane civilization.

Victor Morrow, Hastings, Ontario

Please enter a membership in my name for 1998, for which I enclose a check. I thoroughly enjoyed the October - December 1997 issue of *Community Service Newsletter* which, I believe, was sent to me courtesy of Antioch alumnus Howard Cort. I especially liked the lead article, "Without Vision the People Perish," by Ernest Morgan.

Harold W. Juhre, Jr., Albany, NY

The Newsletter is a literary and environmental gem. I save them all.

Marie Inslee, Downington, PA

Book Review

COMMUNITY AND THE POLITICS OF PLACE, by Daniel Kemmis: University of Oklahoma Press: 1992: 150 pp softcover; \$11.95.

The Balance of Hope and Realism

BY MARIANNE MACQUEEN

My own experience in public life...has left me convinced that our way of being public is a deepening failure.... If in fact there is a connection between the places we inhabit and the political culture which our inhabiting of them produces, then perhaps it makes sense to begin with the place, with a sense of what is, and then try to imagine a way of being public which would fit the place.

I tend to choose books from the library shelf because the title attracts me. *Community and the Politics of Place* was such a book. I was intrigued by the concept of a "politics of place," and was willing to consider anything which would help me understand how to better bring community into politics. It turns out that Kemmis, a former Montana state representative and mayor of Missoula, was mentored by a colleague of mine, Chris Carlson. Without digressing into my admiration for Chris, who was the first director of the Commission on Dispute Resolution for the State of Ohio, it is sufficient to say that I knew I had to read Kemmis' book.

Most of us interested in community believe that it is possible for members of a community to seek and work toward the common good. Those of us who do not live in an intentional community frequently find that the common good is awfully hard to define, let alone reach. In the arena of politics, even local politics, it is almost absent.

Kemmis traces the ups and downs of the belief in the common good from the early republican philosophy of Jefferson, through the progressive era of the late 1800's to today. He shows how this principle was diminished during the creation of the Constitution and almost snuffed out by the presidential electoral campaign of 1896. During McKinley's campaign, the effective use of big money defeated a more grassroots effort. As Kemmis notes, this significantly diminished people's belief that they could have a say in their own governance. The progressive movement never really recovered from this defeat.

By employing examples from his own, obviously beloved, place of Montana and the western region, Kemmis develops the concepts and implications of community, politics and the economic market within a particular geographic place. He shows how the interplay of "the unencumbered self" and regulatory bureaucracy has left little incentive in searching for the public good.

The lack of having a "table" around which we can meet publicly has contributed to the pendulum effect of one group "winning" one time, the other group "winning" the next. The net effect is a loss for the public regardless of who wins. The mechanism used for gaining public input, the public hearing, only contributes to this. Kemmis describes the public hearing:

A visitor from another planet might reasonably expect that at a public hearing there would be a public, not only speaking to itself, but also hearing itself. Public hearing, in this sense, would be part of an honest conversation which the public holds with itself. But that almost never happens.



At the same time, he provides historical and recent examples of people's successful cooperative efforts. For example, the barn raising he experienced as a child on the family farm and the collaborative agreement for waste water reached by an environmental group and a pulp mill.

Kemmris creates a tapestry of the western landscape for the reader by weaving together threads of various concepts - the role of the western frontier, the relationship between the city and its region, the marketplace, the meaning of being public, and so forth. He teases out strong threads of commonly held values which could support a background of the common good. He says:

(P)laces have a way of claiming people. When they claim very diverse people, then those people must eventually learn to live with each other.... If people could actually hear the ways in which their

neighbors' lives and hopes are rooted in this particular part of the earth that they all call home, they might be able to figure out how to go about living well together here.

Balancing hope and realism, Kemmis takes on two of the most powerful interrelated forces: the global economy and the effect of corporations on communities. Without being a Pollyanna, he does offer concrete suggestions for dealing with these forces for the work of creating sustainable communities.

Kemmris makes good use of the works of other authors and thinkers including Friedrich Hegel, Hanna Arendt, Jane Jacobs, Wallace Stegner, and Wendell Berry. The book has a useful bibliography for the reader who would like more information. *Community and the Politics of Place* is available at major book stores and through the publisher by calling 1-800-627-7377. Kemmis' most recent book is entitled *The Good City and the Good Life*.

For those readers interested in community development and control in the western United States, the journal *Chronicle of Community* will also be of interest. Call (406)-721-7415 for more information.





Announcements

International Communal Studies Association, Sixth Annual Conference.

Utopian Communities and Sustainability will be the theme of the conference scheduled for July 7th through 9th 1998 at the historic University of the Netherlands at Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Registration before May 15, 1998: Individuals: \$140.; Institutions: \$215. After 5-15-98: Individuals: \$160; Institutions: \$235. For information concerning registration and the program write to:

Conference Office,
Univ. of Amsterdam,
Spul 21, 1012 WX
Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

Tel: +31 20 525 4791
Fax: +31 20 525 4799
EMail: Congres@bdu.uva.nl

Deadline for early hotel reservations: May 15.

IMAGO, Inc.

EarthSpirit Rising: Midwest Conference on Healing and Celebrating Planet Earth. May 22-24, 1998, held at the College of Mt.St. Joseph. For information and/or registrations write or call:

IMAGO, Inc.,
EarthSpirit Rising Conference,
553 Enright Avenue,
Cincinnati, OH 45387.
513-9211-5124.

Community Development Society Conference on Sustainability and Community

The Thirtieth Annual International Conference of The Community Development Society, on Sustainability and Community: Critical Connections, will be held on July 18-21, 1998 at the Omni Hotel, Kansas City, MO For information write or call:

CDS Program Committee
204 Sociology Building
University of Missouri
Columbia, MO 65211
753-882-4350

Genesis Farm Earth Literacy Programs:

Exploring the Sacred Universe, an intensive two-week seminar for seeking deeper understanding of the Universe Story... and living in harmony with nature. April 4-17; July 23-Aug. 5; Aug. 17-30. Academic credit available. \$725.

Extended Earth Literacy Programs:
Spring: 6-week program May 4 - May 16
Fall: 6-wk program Aug. 17 - Sept. 27
Fall: 12-wk program Aug. 17 -Nov. 8.
To request the 1998 Calendar of Events or to register write or call:

Genesis Farm Learning Center,
41A Silver Lake Road

Glen Helen Ecology Institute: Winter Evening Program Series:

Programs will take place on Wednesday evenings at 7:30 in the Glen Helen Building, 405 Corry Street, Yellow Springs, OH 45387. All are free and open to the public.

For more information call 937-767-7375

Mar. 3, 1998: Sustainable Agriculture: Farming for Future Generations, by Jeff Dickinson, Dir., Stratford Ecological Center.

Mar. 25, 1998: Sustainability in the Workplace, by Lisa Abel, Yellow Springs Instrument Community Engineer.

Apr. 22, 1998: Water: Going with the Flow, by Aimee Lunde, Environmental Consultant.

Apr. 22, 1998: Building Sustainable Communities, by Rick Flood, Dir., Glen Helen Ecological Institute.



American Farmland Trust

Conference on Agricultural Conservation Easements: What Works

All sessions of the conference, as well as meals, will be held March 29 - 31 at family-run, historic Allenberry Resort in Boiling Springs, PA. Before February 28, full conference registration is \$125. One-day registration is \$75. After Feb. 28, a late fee of \$15 will be charged. Conference includes field trips. To make reservations, write or call:

Allenberry Resort Inn & Playhouse
P. O. Box 7
Boiling Springs, PA 17007-0007
(717) 258-3211

or

Days Inn Carlisle
101 Alexander Spring Road
Carlisle, PA 17013
(717) 258-4147

and identify yourself as a member of the American Farmland Trust group.



For more information call 304-876-7551

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Staff: Marianne MacQueen Editor
Sada Ashby Typesetter
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Trustees: Jim Crowfoot, Heidi Eastman, Bill Felker,
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Membership is a means of supporting and sharing in the work of Community Service. The basic \$25 annual membership contribution includes a subscription to the quarterly Newsletter and 10% discount on Community Service-published literature. Larger contributions are always needed and smaller ones gladly accepted. All contributions are tax deductible. Due to added postage costs, foreign membership, including Canada, is \$30 in U.S. currency.

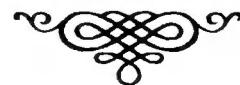
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We welcome letters to the editor (under 300 words) and articles (700-2000 words) about notable communities, projects or organizations and people who are improving the quality of life in their communities. The compensation for an article is a year's subscription to the newsletter.

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